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25 December 1961

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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Approved For Release 2002/11/19 : CIA-RDP79T00975A006100270001-4

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DAILY BRIEF

*Congo: While there has been no change in the Katangan government's decision announced on 23 December that its assembly was the sole valid authority to accept or reject the agreement made at Kitona, it has decided to send a Katangan parliamentary delegation "perhaps as early as 27 December" to Leopoldville. Under the agreement, Tshombé agreed that Katangan deputies and senators would resume participation in the national parliament by 27 December, and that Katangan representatives would participate in discussions on modifying the Congo constitution on 3 January. A Katanga government communiqué indicates that the delegation will bring proposals for constitutional changes.

It is unlikely, however, that Tshombé by this move has decided to honor the Kitona agreement; he probably hopes by it to indicate his reasonableness, and to leave acceptance or rejection sufficiently hazy to forestall forceful action against him.

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Secretary General Thant and other top UN officials state that UN forces have been ordered to continue the "hold fire" and that no military action is contemplated except in self-defense or to hold existing positions and communications. Also, no military action is contemplated against Jadotville or Kolwezi, where they believe most of the white mercenaries are. Ralph Bunche states that Tshombé will be allowed up to one month to implement his agreement at Kitona "to facilitate implementation of

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the UN resolutions"; this is presumably in regard to the ouster of the mercenaries. One UN official who was very concerned over the civilian casualties which had resulted from the Elisabethville fighting said he had advised that the UN "lie low for the present."

The American consul in Elisabethville reports, however, that the "hold fire" between UN and Katangan forces remains "fragile"; each side charges the other with making provocative moves. The Katangan government, the consul reports, has reserved the right of freedom of movement for the Katangan forces. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] the Katangan forces are taking advantage of the "hold-fire" to regroup and reinforce their forces in Elisabethville.

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Prime Minister Adoula said in a 23 December radiobroadcast from Leopoldville that the central government's determination to end the secession of Katanga was "unshakeable." The previous day, Adoula stated that he was unwilling to hold new talks with Tshombé, since "we have made all the compromises possible."

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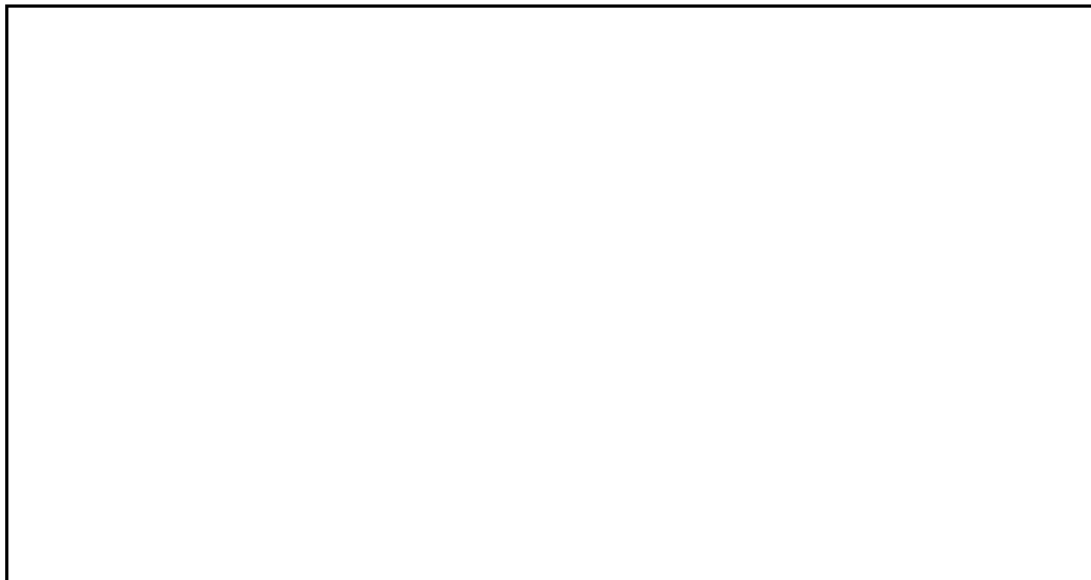
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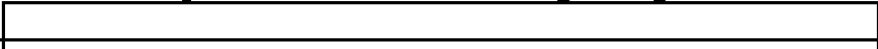
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*Laos: The way apparently has been cleared for a meeting of the three princes in Vientiane beginning on 27 December. 

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All signs point to hard bargaining in the negotiations. Immediate attention will center on the cabinet's composition and distribution of portfolios among the Boun Oum - Phoumi faction, Souvanna's "neutralist" group, and the Communist Pathet Lao. Phoumi is still basically unwilling to accept a Souvanna-led coalition and has recently predicted that the talks will end in an impasse. 

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Syria: The 16-man Dawalibi cabinet announced on 23 December is the unsatisfactory product of delay and compromise. It is a heterogeneous conglomeration of rightists and leftists which lacks representatives of the important Nationalist party and influential leftist leaders. Apparently, cooperation between the conservative Populist and Nationalist parties already has broken down less than a month after the parliamentary elections. There is reason to doubt that Dawalibi will receive parliamentary approval of his cabinet, and an early cabinet reshuffle or even a new cabinet may be in the offing. []

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India-Commonwealth: New Delhi's enthusiasm for its Commonwealth relationship seems to be waning after several months of gradual deterioration in its relations with the United Kingdom. The immediate point of friction has been the Goan episode, and particularly the frequent references to London's 14th-century pact with Lisbon. Among the other difficulties involved are London's immigration policies toward Commonwealth members, differences of view on Congo matters, and especially New Delhi's concern over Britain's efforts to enter the European Common Market. []

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USSR: Ambassador-designate to the United States Anatoly Dobrynin--for whom Menshikov requested agreement on 21 December--is presently head of the American Countries Division of the Soviet Foreign Ministry. He served in Washington as minister-counselor of the Soviet Embassy during 1952-54 and was later undersecretary of the United Nations Secretariat in New York; he is 42, speaks excellent English, and impressed observers at the UN as being an astute diplomat who mingles easily with foreigners. Menshikov will presumably be assigned in the Foreign Ministry in Moscow; he now is completing a four-year tour in Washington and has served abroad since 1953. []

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